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FANTASY

MATURE READERS

Katmandu

Katmandu

FROM THE FAMILY HISTORY OF LEAHTRAH MIDDLESMITH
WOMAN of HONOR
PART TWO

I NEVER HAVE TO DO THIS FOR MY TROOPS!

IF YOU DID TO YOUR TROOPS WHAT YOU DID TO ME, YOU'D BE COURTMARTIALED! OHHHH, THAT FEELS GOOD!

I'M WAITING TO HEAR MORE ABOUT LISKA -- AND RIAL.

STORY...CAROLE CURTIS
PENCILS...TERRIE SMITH
INKS...MARK BARNARD

FOR PATTY & VIRGINIA IN OMAHA

ANTARCTIC BLAST
JUNE 1995

THE SKY IS FALLING! THE SKY IS FALLING!

an editorial by Ben Dunn

As many of you may (or may not) know, **exclusivity** is now the name of the game in the comics industry. Led by **Marvel** in their acquisition of **Heroes World, DC** has followed suit by becoming exclusive to **Diamond Comics.** What these two could not do in the open market, they will now try to do in a restricted market.

There is no doubt that there are going to be repercussions. To be sure, there will be certain retailers and publishers who are going to feel this in the morning. But whenever a company takes a course of action that limits access to its product, that company is eventually going to suffer the consequences. Therefore, I feel that there is no need to fear the actions of Marvel and DC, and that we should not cave in to panic. Does either of them actually think that they can save their market share by taking this course of action? Do they think that the customers they lost are actually going to come back if they continue in their present line of thinking? Obviously, they do. But their reasoning is gravely flawed. They lost readers because the comics they were doing were not appealing to the public. And instead of trying to improve or streamline, their solution is to create a potential apocalypse for the direct market. Unable to compete on the strength of their product alone, they feel they have to use their weight to upset everyone else's applecart.

Will they succeed in this? I don't think so. Sure, it's going to be messy. There will be casualties and "accepted losses." The survivors, though, will be stronger. They can build anew. They can band together to combat disaster and keep the lines of communication going.

So what can we at AP do about the changes? Simple. Do business as usual. Keep pumping out the books that helped cause Marvel and DC to take this course of action. Ask yourself this question: Why did they make this choice to begin with? Because they do not understand their reading audience. The readers are THE MOST IMPORTANT THING to the industry. All the fancy foil-embossed, die-cut, big-name comics cannot hold a candle if the audience is not there. Instead of going back to the market's core root — providing readers with excitement and entertainment — Marvel and DC have chosen to ignore the market's desire for more (and more interesting) books, in hopes of FORCING retailers to buy their product. They do this with the hope that they can shore up their foundering market share . . . but the independents will continue to erode their base because independents know what readers want.

Antarctic Press, Chaos, London Night, Caliber, VIZ, Dark Horse, and a host of others have proven that you do not have to be a Marvel or DC to sell their numbers. All you have to do is put out a product people want. Let Marvel and DC continue in their ways. The last thing we should do is panic. Stay calm and hold a steady course. Refuse to be intimidated by their actions. We must take a long look at our product and invest even more effort in it. Decide what is the best way to get that product out there and cater to our audience.

With so much going on it can be very easy to lose sight of what we are here for. AP is a publisher of comics. We have done our first music CD with many more to follow. Soon we will going into animation, video, and multimedia. However, we will always be a publisher of comics because that is what we know and that is what we love. If we keep sight of that (as Marvel and DC have not), we can weather any storm.

-Ben Dunn

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SO RIAL TOOK LISKA AS A BED SLAVE, AND STARTED YOUR FAMILY LINE. RIGHT?

THORIN! YOU'RE GETTING AHEAD OF THE STORY! THAT'S NOT HOW IT HAPPENED. I HOPE OUR KITTENS AREN'T AS IMPATIENT!

THERE'S PLENTY OF TIME BEFORE WE ARRIVE TONIGHT, TO TELL YOU ABOUT LISKA.

IS THERE MUCH MORE?

HUSH! RIAL TREATED LISKA WITH MORE RESPECT, NOW THAT THEY'D SLEPT TOGETHER. SO NICELY THAT, AT TIMES, SHE FORGOT THAT HE HAD KIDNAPPED HER, YEARS BEFORE...

HER STATUS WAS GREATER THAN BEFORE. SHE SHARED A TENT WITH RIAL, BUT NOT EVERYONE ACKNOWLEDGED HER NEW POSITION...

THAT SLAVE OF RIAL'S IS SO FULL OF HERSELF, NOW THAT HE'S BEDDING HER!

I DON'T THINK SHE'LL KEEP THAT PLACE IF SHE DOESN'T PRODUCE A KITTEN SOON.

TRUE! MY ARBA'S MOTHER CHECKED MY MONTHLIES UNTIL MY FIRST PREGNANCY!

THERE! RIAL WILL LIKE THAT!

RIAL!

SOMETIMES I WISH I HADN'T GIVEN YOU THAT TALKING BIRD!

HMMM?

THAT'S NOT MORIAH -- THAT'S MOTHER 'SANNA! WAIT HERE.

WHAT DOES SHE WANT?

MOTHER SANNA. WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, THIS MORNING?

WHY ARE YOU STILL ABED? IT'S MID-MORNING.

I'VE BEEN UP. RIAL JUST WOKE, AND IT'S MY FERTILE CYCLE.

I CAME TO SEE IF YOU HAD ANY SIGNS YET...OF NEW LIFE?

BACK INTO THE TENT! YOU'VE IMPORTANT WORK TO DO. I WILL MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT INTERRUPTED AGAIN!

NONE YET, MOTHER SANNA.

AH, YES...! I REMEMBER MY LOVE, ATHOS, IN THE MORNING. RIAL WILL GET FINE SONS.

GOOD MORNING, MISTRESS SANNA. I NEED TO SEE RIAL ABOUT OUR HUNTING PARTIES.

NOT NOW! HE'S BUSY WITH LISKA!

-- RIAL --

DAMN BIRD!

RIA-AL!

I HEAR PYNDAN OUTSIDE. BETTER GO SEE HIM.

MOTHER SANNA WOULD WANT ME TO STAY HERE FOR A WHILE.

AND YOU?

I SEE.

'MORNING, EVERYONE!

READY TO PLAN OUR LATEST RAIDS?

AFTER A BATH!

AT LAST THEY'RE GONE -- ALL THREE! TIME TO GET THE SPONGE. I CAN'T DEPEND ON JUST SWITCHING THE STONES TO KEEP ME FROM 'CATCHING' NOW!

RIA-AL?

WELL, YOU'VE CERTAINLY BEEN CHEERFUL LATELY!

YOU OUGHT TO TRY IT. MAYBE WE'LL CATCH YOU A BEDSLAVE, TODAY!

SPLOSH

SO, TELL ME ABOUT OUR PARTIES.

I HEAD ONE. YOU LEAD THE OTHER. WE HUNT ON THE PLAIN. YOU GO UPRIVER.

I DON'T LIKE IT. WE WORK BETTER TOGETHER!

AGREED, BUT CHIEF POWNETKEE WANTS US BOTH AS GROUP LEADERS.

GOOD BATH?

YEP. THAT'S A LOT OF FOOD FOR JUST US.

I'M ALSO FEEDING MOTHER SANNA, THE CHIEF, AND HIS SENESCHAL.

WELL, PYNDAN SHOULD GET YOU MORE MEAT TODAY.

LOOKS QUIET.

ALL THEIR WARRIORS ARE GONE?

APPARENTLY SO. HUNTING, I ASSUME.

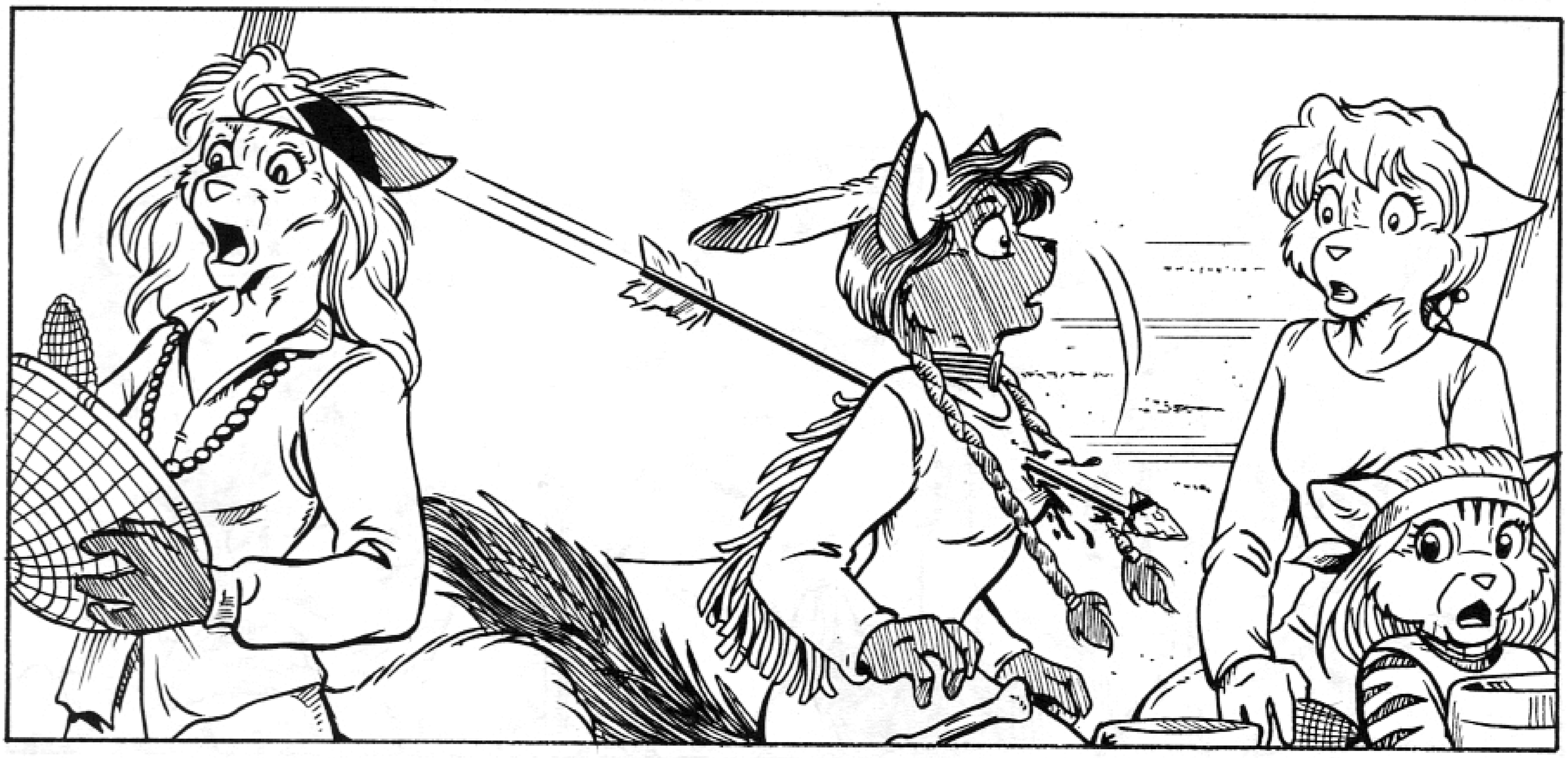
HMM. IT'S BEEN DAYS SINCE OUR LAST HOT MEAL. THAT STEW SMELLS GOOD.

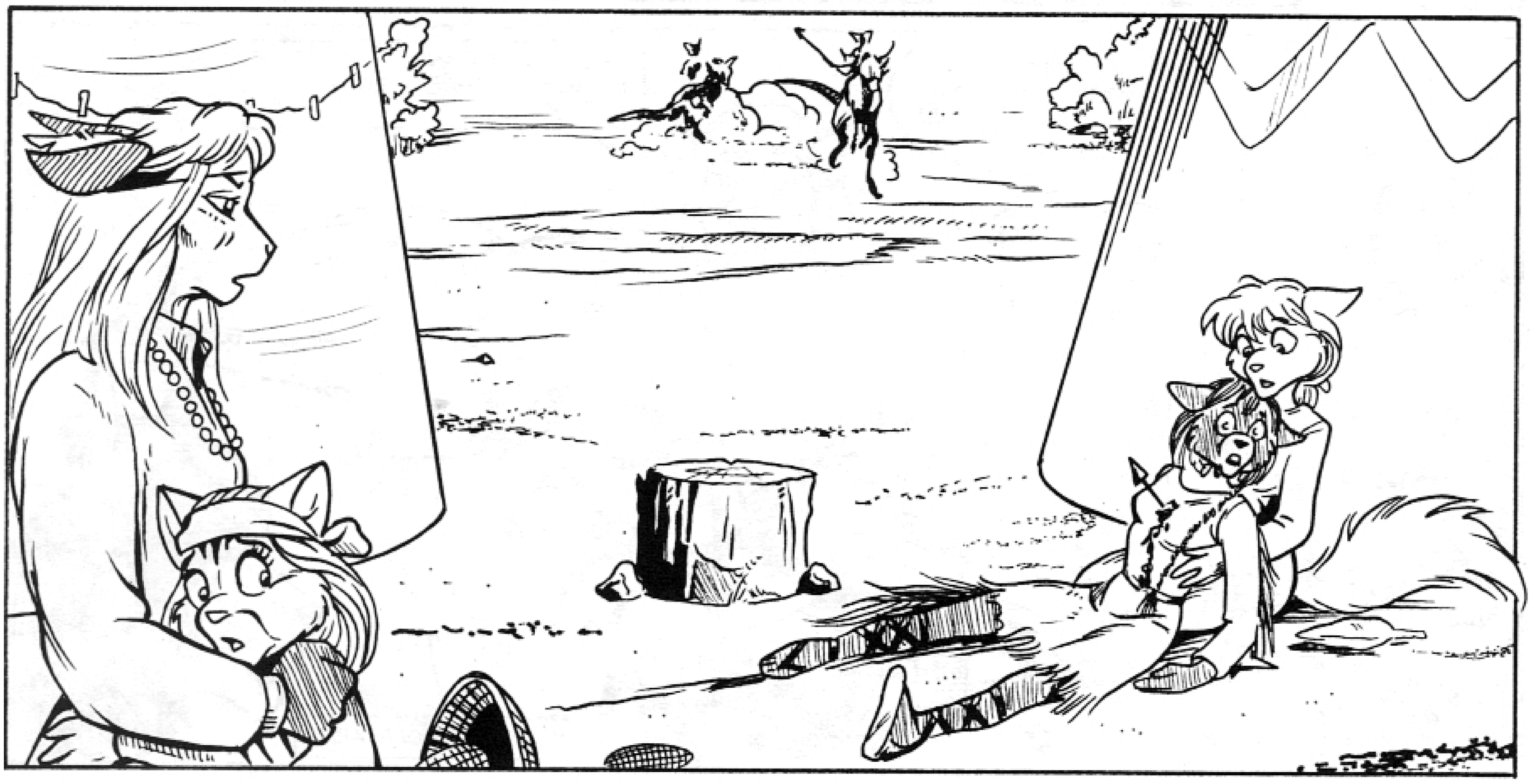
LOOK AT THE FEMALES! SINCE WE WERE CAST OUT FROM HOPLITE LANDS, I'VE DREAMED OF PLEASURE BETWEEN A PAIR OF LONG LEGS...

WHY WASTE TIME? FOOD, DRINK AND WOMEN AWAIT US!

WHILE VORIN AND I ENCIRCLE THEM, YOU THREE BEGIN THE ATTACK!

AYE, COMMANDER ARN!





CRACK!

MOTHER SANNA? CAN YOU SAVE KEBEC'S SISTER?

NO, CHILD. SHE'S BEYOND HELP. RUN TO THE CHIEF AND THE SENESCHAL! THIS BANDIT WAS NOT ALONE!

SNAP!

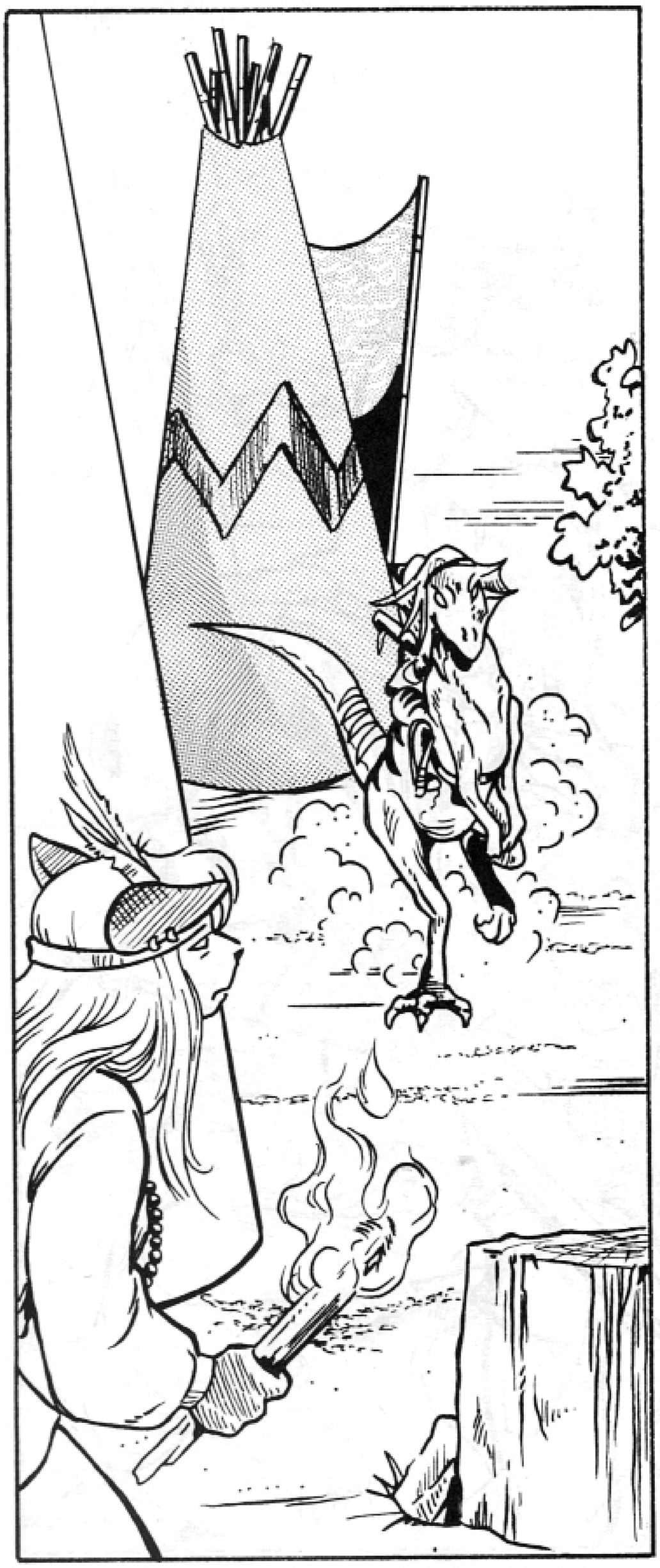
KEBEC! KAYCE IS NO LONGER *HERE!* PYNDAN'S SISTER IS! HER ARM IS BROKEN... COMFORT *HER!* SHE CAN FEEL IT!

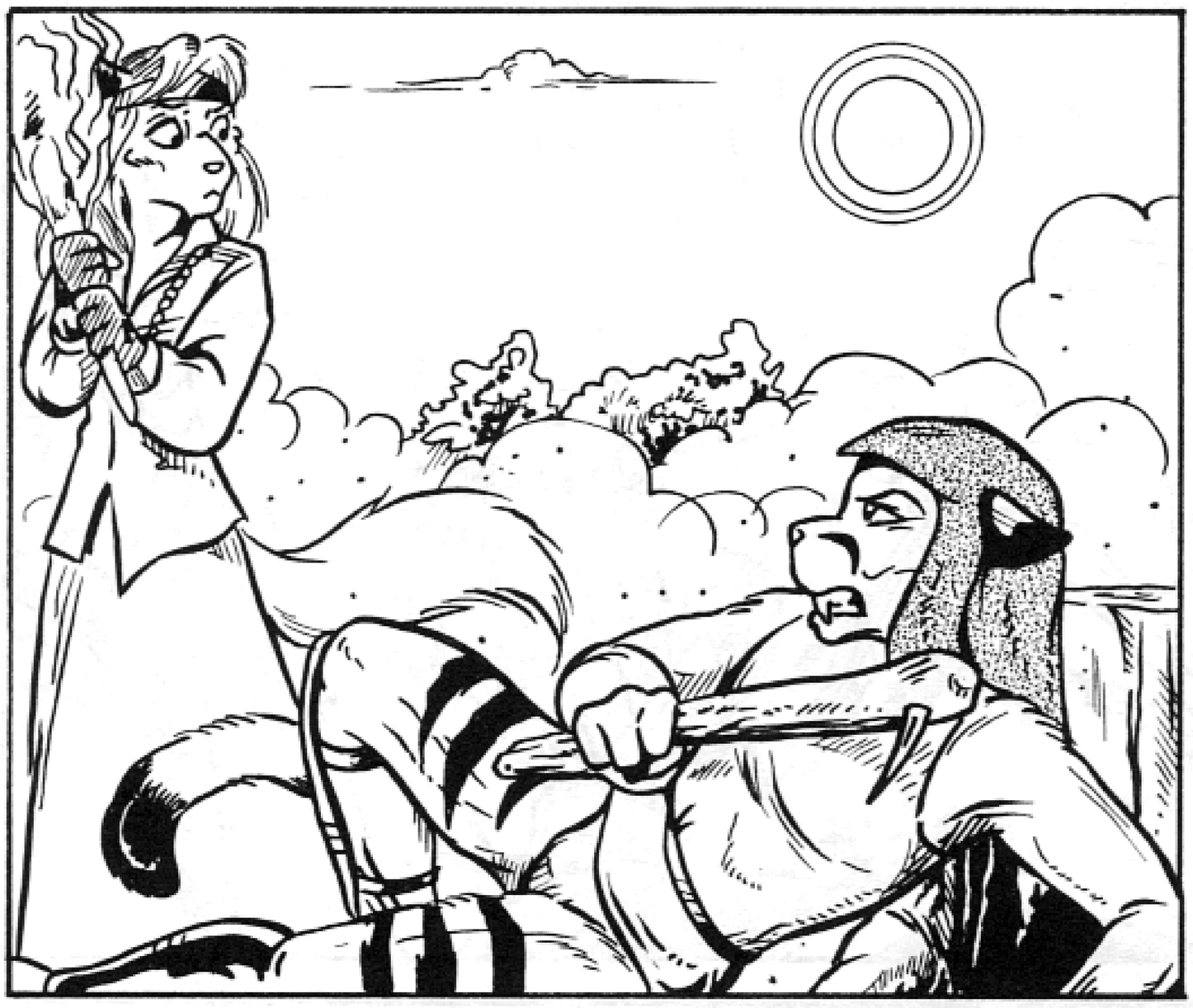
CHIEF...?

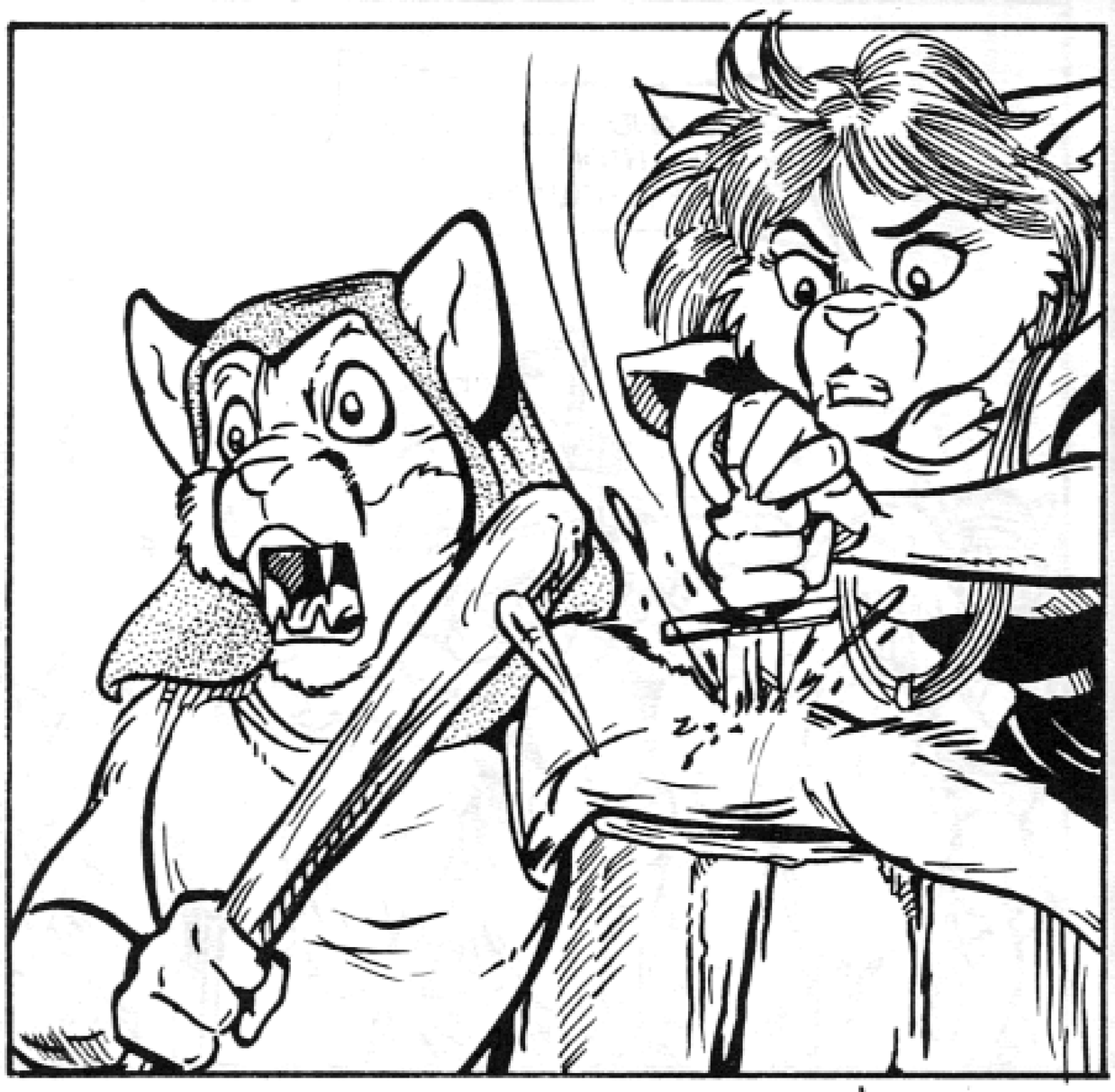
VORIN, THIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASY! NOW THEY'VE KILLED FOUR OF US!

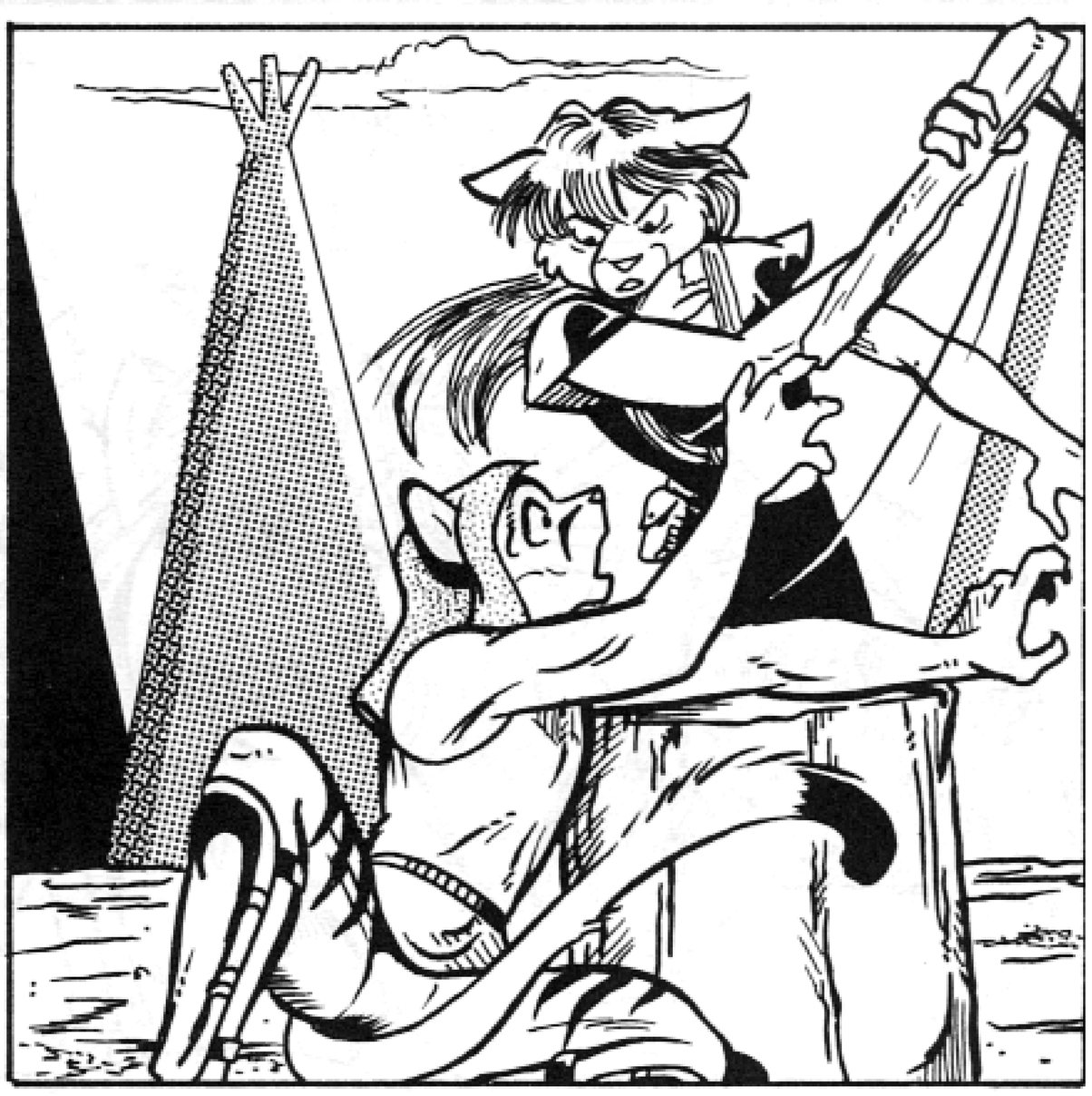
THEIR CHIEF IS IN RANGE! I'LL GET HIM!

STUPID MOVE, VORIN! I'M GETTING OUT!









WHY WOULD SOMEONE LEAVE THEIR SUPPLIES ON THE PLAIN?

I DON'T KNOW. THIS IS A GOOD THROWING KNIFE.

PYNDAN! WE'VE FOUND TRACKS! THREE ON FOOT, THREE MOUNTED. ALL HEADED FOR THE VILLAGE!

KASIL, QUICK! GET THE TWO FASTEST LIZARDS!

KASIL AND I ARE GOING AHEAD. HIDE THE GAME, THEN FOLLOW! FAST!

PYNDAN -- THOSE ARE NOT LIZARDS FROM OUR STOCK! TOO BIG!

GET YOUR BOW READY! WE'LL MAKE THEM PAY!

THREE WITH SPEARS! GET READY!

HOLD POSITION -- WE HAVE TO STOP THEM HERE!

CHIEF! IT'S PAYDAN AND KASIL!

KASIL! HOLD FIRE!

WHAT HAPPENED HERE, LISKA?

WE WERE ATTACKED BY LONGTOOTH RAIDERS. THEY'RE DEAD, BUT...

KASIL, COME WITH ME.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HER! THE BRUTE BROKE PANKA'S ARM, BUT LISKA SPEARED HIM JUST BEFORE HE STABBED ME.

IF ONLY ONE OF OUR PARTIES HAD BEEN HERE! I HAVEN'T SEEN THESE WARRIORS BEFORE. POWNETKEE SAYS SHE KILLED THREE!

PYNDAN! THE CHIEF WANTS TO SEE US.

I WISH RIAL WAS BACK. THOSE BANDITS COULD HAVE FRIENDS...

I DON'T THINK SO. WE FOUND SUPPLIES FOR SIX. I'VE SENT RUNNERS UPRIVER.

LISKA, PYNDAN, ENTER.

PYNDAN, A BOWMAN SLEW KAYCE, BEGINNING THE LONGTOOTH ASSAULT. YOUR SISTER'S ARM WAS BROKEN THEN. LISKA SLEW THAT RAIDER, AND ONE WHO MENACED THE SENESCHAL. WHEN ALL LAY DEAD BUT THE LEADER, SHE TOOK HIS LIFE AS WELL.

NOW, LISKA, SLAVE OF RIAL IS ALSO DEAD.

WE WELCOME LISKA MITSEL EMAN -- 'WOMAN OF HONOR,' AS A FREE WARRIOR OF THE HIGHLAND PEOPLE. ACCEPT YOUR HEADBAND AS THE OUTWARD SIGN OF YOUR NEW NAME AND LIFE.

WHAT WILL I TELL RIAL?

HOLD STILL. THIS HAS TO BE JUST RIGHT.

PYNDAN!

RIAL WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO HUNT.

BUT...I'M HIS BEDSLAVE! I FEED HIM AND MOTHER SANNA.

NOT ANYMORE!

PYNDAN, LISKA! WHILE YOU WERE IN THE CHIEF'S TENT, A RUNNER RETURNED...

MOTHER SANNA, WHAT'S WRONG?

RIAL'S BAND WAS AMBUSHED! HE FOUGHT ALONE TO GUARD HIS WARRIORS' RETREAT. HE WAS CAPTURED...!

I KNOW SOME PEOPLE IN THAT AREA. I CAN ASK THEM...

LISKA, RIAL IS MY ONLY FAMILY HERE. COULD I STAY WITH YOU? I COULD COOK FOR US...

MOTHER SANNA, THAT'S MY DUTY!

YOU ARE A FREE WARRIOR NOW. I WILL KEEP HOUSE WHILE YOU HUNT, THUS PRESERVING YOUR HONOR.

VERY WELL, MOTHER SANNA. AS LONG AS WE STAY TOGETHER.

PYNDAN? WHO WILL YOU ASK?

THAT TRIBE LIKES TO TRADE. IF WE HAD ENOUGH GOODS...

I WAS GOOD AT KNUCKLEBONES. ARE THERE TRIBES AROUND HERE THAT GAMBLE?

THE REDHAND PEOPLE BY THE LAKE. LET'S TALK WHILE WE HUNT.

...WE COULD TRADE FOR RIAL?

YES! I'LL HELP.

YOU'RE GOING TO STOP THERE?!

THORIN, THE CITY WALLS ARE IN SIGHT.

WELL, DID SHE MARRY PYNDAN? IS HE YOUR ANCESTOR?

REMEMBER WHEN YOU HAD THAT INFECTION? HOW HARD I HAD TO SLAP YOU?

I'LL FINISH THE STORY TONIGHT, MY LOVE. I PROMISE.

IF -- OUCH -- OUR CHILDREN DON'T INTERRUPT!

TO BE CONCLUDED...

MARKREE & TORI ©CAROLE CURTIS
by SaberRyan '95

"PYNDAN" ©CAROLE CURTIS
by STEVE RYAN '95

KATMANDU

OH, BROTHER!

HEY! WHO ATE ALL MY CHOCOLATES? HAS **XODI** BEEN HERE?

WHY, YES, DEAR. YOUR BROTHER *DID* STOP BY THIS MORNING...

STORY: CATHY CARTER

PENCILS/INKS: SHEA RYAN

I *THOUGHT* SO.

OH, MAXIMA! I *KNOW* HE WOULDN'T EAT *ALL* YOUR CHOCOLATES... HE'S *ALWAYS* BEEN GOOD ABOUT SHARING WITH YOU!

GULP!

REMEMBER HOW XODI USED TO GIVE YOU THE BAG OF CARMEL-COVERED RICE PUFFS AND LET YOU GET YOUR HALF *FIRST*?

HMF! I DIDN'T EVEN *KNOW* CARMEL-COVERED RICE PUFFS *HAD* ZAGANUTS 'TIL I WAS A TEENAGER. THEY ALWAYS SANK TO THE BOTTOM—IN *HIS* HALF!

I *OUGHT* TO TURN HIM INTO A *PIG* FOR A DAY! NO, THAT WOULD EMBARRASS THE FAMILY. HMM...

—I'VE GOT IT!

YEP, YEP!

EVERYBODY STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN! I'M FIXING A ***SURPRISE!!***

HI, MOM! I'M HERE FOR MY WEEKEND VISIT!

HELLO, XODI.

SNIF SNIF

IS MAXIMA-- COOKING?

YES. STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN.

ALL DONE! NOW TO LET IT COOL... GOT TO LEAVE A SPOON NEARBY.

HEH!

GET ENOUGH, XODI?

UH-HUH.

=BURP=

WHY, XODI, YOU SHOULD HAVE *TOLD* ME YOU WERE HUNGRY. I WOULD HAVE FIXED YOU SOME *DINNER*, —INSTEAD OF MAKING WALLPAPER PASTE!

SURPRISE!

END

From The Scratching Post

Katmandu
P.O. Box 2452
Conway
Arkansas 72022

From Carole;

Hello Everyone! Moving is just like going on a shakedown cruise. Everything in motion and you don't know what's going to break. Lost some antiques and some books, but we still have 10,000 books in the house.

We still plan on going to Confurence East in October. Hope to see some of you there.

Plans are already in the works for the next 3-issue miniseries. In one, Thorin goes to war. That's next years book. I also want to do more exploring of Liska's time.

Here are some excerpts from fan letters. Some came to Terrie, some to Kat. We welcome all letters. If you want a personal reply, send an SASE or a U.S. Postal money order for our friends outside the states. Postage & Xeroxing are eating us alive! Shanda & Katmandu share the same P.O. Box. We enjoy getting mail.

Carole

David Tepia
Dinuba CA.

OK Carole, Comments about Katmandu #4- I truly enjoy this story of Leah's ancestors. How many years in the past is this taking place? [*About 200 years. C.*] Another question- On the first panel of page 3- Is Markee really about to hit that kitten with his fist? Sheesh, what a bully! [*Yes, Markee's going to hit him- but nobody else had better try it! C.*) I do hope that he is still alive and that Liska will be reunited with him but who knows? My one complaint: In page two Leah states that her parents liked Thorin but us poor readers didn't get a chance to see this. I want to see what Leah's parents are like and I want to hear specifically what they said about Thorin. In another issue perhaps? Please? [*I'd love to. C.*] How about showing us Thorin's brothers and what they think about Leah? [*No room! C.*] Too bad you're a limited amount of pages to tell a complete story. Oh well, I can just hope that there will eventually be an expanded edition of Katmandu sometime.

Now I know you didn't write the back-up story Carole, [*Cathy Carter writes a good kicker, doesn't she? C.*] but maybe you can answer my questions: First is Helios intentionally meant to appear to dress like Terrie Smith's "Chester" character? [*Terrie gracefully gave us an OK - She retains all rights to her character. C.*] Now about the ending- Helios didn't change Esmerelda into a guy did he? [Of course not. C.] She appears to still have nipples on her breasts so she was wearing a wig and a padded suit right and her beauty was false right? [*The guy asked for a gift without concern for the person & the reality behind the facade. Yes, she does have a glorious voice. Always do a reality check before asking favors of the Gods. Are you really sure you want it? C.*]

Phil Bolton
Lynnwood WA

I figured I better compliment Carole on Katmandu #4. Lovely work (I love this universe!), and although I'm a little bothered that Liska is kept as a slave, at least she seems to be treated well. I do hope she'll get to be an actual member of the family in the future, and that she'll be happy. I do wonder what became of her family that was left behind.

Carole's writing talents absolutely sparkle in this book, the dialog is very crisp and lively. With lots of likeable characters. And of course, Terrie's work is absolutely beautiful as always. As an added treat, a Michelle story! So do you guys ever cooperate on your two books, or do you try to keep your mutual efforts separate? (The mere thought of you two cooperating on a comic story is truly scary. You'd put Chris

Clairmont AND Peter David out of work!) <Grin> [*We write totally different books, but Michael does all my 1st pencils to send to the artists. We also critique each others books. Thanks for the compliment on the writing (Blush Blush)*]

Thomas G. Brady
San Angelo TX
ShyFox@AOL.COM

Congratulations on another great issue, as good as I expected from the ashcan I purchased at Confurence 6. Carole, you have written an effective story. You give an interesting, and not reprehensible, treatment to the difficult subject of slavery. Liska seems a quite strong and adaptable character. Did you do any research on which to base the attitudes and ideals of the highland and lowland societies? [*Yes. It is based on the differences between roving & farming societies. Simple answer to a very complex research problem. I could go on for days! C.*]

The artwork is superb, of course. Could we expect any less from Terrie Smith, Mark Barnard and Michele Light? [*Don't forget Cathy Carter! C.*] Nice to have talked a little with you both at Confurence.

Rommel Karlo C. Ignacio
Tahanan Village
Sucat, Paranaque, Metro Manila
Philippines

To the ever-creative and ultra-entertaining Katmandu. Wholehearted felicitations from the Filipino feline fan.

To Ms. Curtis and Ms. Smith, have you received my little Christmas card to you guys last year? [*No*] If not, maybe Antarctic lost or misplaced it again. [*Yep*] I would like to congratulate you all for doing such a fantastic job on making Katmandu a regular favorite, the story and art are both excellent. I have #1,2 and 4. They are all of astounding quality, and each pack their own wallop.

It is interesting to note the importance of desert civilizations and culture, especially their rituals on courtship and sex. All the passion(s) being unfolded are indeed tasteful and appealing. The eroticism involved was very tasteful, Leah's Velite story was very entertaining. The art and the story have never dwindled in quality.

[*Cathy Carter's story and*] Michele Light's work is cute and pleasing. Her style is refreshing to look at. Mark Barnard, the Ink Man? Inking was never easy, and your inking quality is consistent through all the Katmandu episodes. Your great!

I was wondering about fan art submissions. [*Yes, we accept some fan art. It must be good, reproducible clean copies. C.*]

If luck smiles on me, I'll get to see next year's Confurence. Finally, Internet. I could be reached at address SAROLF@VAX6.DLSU.EDU.PH which I share with Florante Navarro.

Brock Hoagland
Hazen ND

I've gotten SHANDA'S WORLD, NAUTILUS and KATMANDU Ashcan Edition. I loved the KATMANDU three issue series. Anything with art by Terrie is going to be great, and apperently any story by Carole is also going to be great! The sex was integral to the story, rather than the story being an excuse for depicting sex as is usually the case. That's the way erotic should be handled. I liked the desert setting and the society with its mix of technology and magic looks interesting. From appearances I'd guess both were limited, though of course the military and the wealthy would have plenty.

Take care.

Boyce Gerald Kline Jr.
Ledyard CT

Dear Terrie

Katmandu #4. What a great issue! Thorin looks extremely handsome in his uniform. How is "Leahtrah" pronounced? [*Lee-ahh-trah. C.*] Carole's storyline was once again superb and your excellent drawings along with Mark's inks really evoked the mood of the story and its characters. All in all issue #4 was spectacular. I can't wait until #5 is available.

Shanda Fantasy Arts

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